

today. Our response to tragedy and sudden national challenges has revealed the courage, and it has revealed the kindness of the American people. As we fight a war abroad, here at home Americans are answering the call of service, giving their time and energy to causes greater than self-interest. This Nation is confronting a terrible evil, and we are overcoming evil with good.

There is much in modern America that the founding generation might not understand. Yet, they would recognize the Stars and Stripes, and they would know qualities of character that still define our country. They would take great pride, as I do, in the decent, responsible, caring citizens who are the true strength of our country. I am certain as well that, if they could survey this country of ours, they would join us all in giving thanks for all that we have.

A year after independence was declared, the Second Continental Congress set the design of our Nation's flag. The stars on blue were to represent a new constellation,

the different world our young Nation had begun to create. Today, as much as ever before, America bears the hope of the world. Yet, from the day of our founding, America's own great hope has never been in ourselves alone. The Founders humbly sought the wisdom and the blessing of Divine Providence.

May we always live by that same trust, and may God continue to watch over the United States of America. God bless, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. at Courthouse Square. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Bob Wise, Attorney General Darrel V. McGraw, Jr., and Secretary of State Joe Manchin III of West Virginia; Mayor Roy Guthrie of Ripley, WV; Mayor W.S. Ritchie of Ravenswood, WV; Lisa Vance, widow of Sgt. Gene Vance, Jr., USA; and Clyde Shuttlesworth, father of Staff Sgt. Anissa Ann Shero, USAF.

## **Videotaped Remarks to the Vilnius Ten Group of Nations** *July 5, 2002*

I'm honored to send greetings to the leaders of the Vilnius Ten group of nations aspiring to join the NATO Alliance. I want to thank Prime Minister Berzins and President Freiberga for hosting this important event in the great city of Riga. I'm also pleased that Senator Trent Lott and some of his colleagues were able to visit with you today. The U.S. Senate has a critical role to play in ratifying any expansion of NATO, and I appreciate my friend Senator Lott's leadership on these vital issues.

Our nations share a common vision of a new Europe, where free European states are united with each other and with the United States through cooperation, partnership, and alliance. We seek a new Europe that has buried its historic tensions and is

prepared to meet global challenges beyond Europe's borders. America will continue to work arm in arm with Europe on fulfilling this vision.

At the Prague Summit later this year, we can take a major step by enlarging NATO to include all of Europe's democracies that are ready to share in NATO's responsibilities. Since you first met in Vilnius over 2 years ago, your countries have made real progress on the essential reforms necessary for NATO membership. Work continues, as it must, to prepare your nations to make the greatest possible contributions to the new Europe we are building.

Today, our nations face another historic challenge: to defeat the forces of global

terror. The attacks of September the 11th took place in the United States, but their target was freedom, itself. All of Europe and freedom-loving nations everywhere are threatened by these forces of chaos and hatred.

NATO has risen to the challenge, declaring that an attack on one of its members is an attack on all. And NATO nations have made valuable contributions to the war on terror in Afghanistan and elsewhere. NATO must prepare itself to fight and defeat terror and the other threats to freedom that we face together. And new members will help improve NATO's capabilities.

The Prague Summit will mark the beginning of a new era in Europe and in trans-Atlantic relations, defined by greater security and greater prosperity and greater freedom. We will see the great alliance of liberty grow and prepare to fulfill its old mission in a new era. And I am determined to succeed and determined that our chil-

dren will record this year as a momentous turning point in their history.

I wish you success at your meeting. I have met most of you, and I look forward to seeing my good friend Aleksander in a few weeks here in Washington. We have a great opportunity ahead of us. The hopes and prayers of the American people are with you.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 3 p.m. on June 28 in the Blue Room at the White House, for later transmission to the meeting in Riga, Latvia. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 5. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Andris Berzins and President Vaira Vike-Freiberga of Latvia; and President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Statement on the Death of Ted Williams

July 5, 2002

With the passing of Ted Williams, America lost a baseball legend. Whether serving the country in the Armed Forces or excelling on the baseball diamond, Ted Williams demonstrated unique talent and love of country. He inspired young ballplayers

across the Nation for decades, and we will always remember his persistence on the field and his courage off the field. Ted gave baseball some of its best seasons—and he gave his own best seasons to his country. He will be greatly missed.

## Exchange With Reporters in Kennebunkport, Maine

July 6, 2002

### *President's Birthday Golf Outing*

*The President.* Good morning, everybody.

Q. Happy birthday.

*The President.* That's the way we like it, up and early.

Q. We do too. [Laughter]

*The President.* Up and at 'em. Feeling a little older, if you know what I mean.

David [David Gregory, NBC News], how are you, lad?